

IELRB Public Posting

Murphysboro Education Association

The professional educators of Murphysboro School District #186 are proud to be serving our community and our students with a quality education. We work daily to bring the best resources and innovation to give the students of Murphysboro the education that is necessary for future success. The teachers in Murphysboro are proud of our contribution to the successes of this town.

This school year we have been working without a contract for the benefit and well being of the families in this community. The Board of Education and the MEA began negotiating toward a new contract 6 months ago. After several meetings, no agreement has been reached. A federal mediator met with the Board and the Association on two separate occasions with no progress.

The principle source of the dispute relates to the existing contract language regarding new insurance caps proposed by the Board. The Board has refused to negotiate with the MEA **on any matter** unless teachers are willing to change this existing language in a manner that is inconsistent with past practice and would result in significant financial risk to employees. The Association is simply seeking to keep the existing insurance language.

Further, according to School Board Vice President Mike Austin, the Board proposed insurance language would not save the District money during the life of the contract. The new caps suggested by the Board are intended to fully cover all premiums. This ultimatum is clearly an attempt to influence future contracts and not a change necessitated by the School District's current financial state..

The MEA believes that collective bargaining is a two-way street and has been working to come up with creative proposals that are fiscally responsible and fair to both parties. Since beginning the Federal Mediation process the MEA has given the District two proposals. Neither of these proposals has elicited any kind of response/counter-proposal from the other side. The last proposal the MEA received from the Board was on June 16th. Our members unanimously rejected that proposal.

Successful bargaining requires the active participation of both parties, and the MEA has continued to put forward new proposals and bargain in good faith. The Board, however,

has remained silent. Due to the Board's refusal to bargain the MEA feels that it has no other choice than to move to the Public Posting Process.

The Murphysboro Education Association is fully aware of the complicated financial situation in the State of Illinois. It is a situation that is not new and one that has directly affected education in our community. Our teachers have watched positions and programs be eliminated as our colleagues have retired. We have done our part to help District #186. We have accepted minimal or no increases in our salary in recent years. Last year we accepted no increases in our salary in order to retain our insurance language. We have understood the financial need to reduce the number of teaching positions, even though it has placed additional stress and burdens on the remaining faculty and staff of our schools. Our personnel have adapted through these restructurings, while continuing to provide a high quality of education to our students. We will continue to do so through the upcoming move to attendance centers and beyond.

Moving forward, the Association feels that its last proposal from October 27th is modest and mindful of the current economic climate in our district and state. This proposal takes future funding into account and is as follows:

Proposed Salary 2014-2017:

Projected savings: \$271,528.00

1. 2014-2015- Increase of 1% plus Step

Rationale: The teachers feel that after accepting no raise in the past, only asking for a 1% raise is necessary to compensate for cost of living increases. The Board's proposal also starts with the same amount.

2. 2015-2016- An increase of 1% plus Step will occur **if the State of Illinois provides**

Prorated GSA Payment funding equal to that of the 2013-2014 Prorated GSA payment of 88.75%. If the State of Illinois provides Prorated GSA Payment funding in excess of the 2013-2014 Prorated GSA Payment of 88.75%, the dollar amount exceeding 88.75% will be **divided evenly between the teachers and Murphysboro CUSD 186**. Any increase above 1% and Step will be given to the teachers as a raise. If the State of Illinois decreases the Prorated GSA to levels below 88.75% the teachers will only receive a Step increase.

3. 2016-2017- An increase of 2% plus Step will occur **if the State of Illinois provides**

Prorated GSA Payment funding equal to that of the 2013-2014 Prorated GSA payment of 88.75%. If the State of Illinois provides Prorated GSA payment funding in excess of the 2013-2014 Prorated GSA payment of 88.75%, the dollar

amount exceeding 88.75% will be **divided equally between the teachers and Murphysboro CUSD 186**. Any increase above 2% and Step will be given to the teachers as a raise. If the State of Illinois decreases the Prorated GSA to levels below 88.75%, the teachers will only receive a Step increase.

*Rationale: The Association takes into account the fact that our district's budget is directly related to state funding, and only asks for a raise the second two years of this contract if state funding remains the same or is increased. With the retirement of teachers and reducing the number of positions through attrition, this proposal **saves** the district over \$270,000 over 3 years.*

**Insurance Opt-Out:
\$453,600**

Projected savings:

Insurance opt out option for members shall be available for \$150 per month.

*Rationale: As is standard with insurance benefit opt outs, the employee receives a reimbursement upon no longer using employer insurance. This is saving the district money in premiums for each employee. Based on data collected by the MEA, over a 3 year period this proposal would **save** \$453,600.*

The MEA knows that there is a fair solution to this dilemma. We stand together in our commitment to come to a fair agreement that is reached through dialogue and discussion that will serve the teachers, school district and community.